

21 October 1953

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NEAR EAST - AFRICA

1. Investigations contradict Ben Gurion statement on frontier incident:

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[redacted] Prime Minister Ben Gurion's categorical denial that Israeli military forces were involved in the 14 October raid on the Jordanian village is contradicted by the investigations of the American consulate general in Jerusalem and the embassy in Tel Aviv. The UN Mixed Armistice Commission, after conducting its own investigation, formally charged that the raid was carried out by the Israeli regular army.

Under these circumstances, Israel's alacrity in agreeing to present its case before the United Nations suggests that the raid may have been a deliberate attempt to force UN consideration of Arab-Israeli difficulties. In any event, the Israeli armed forces are considered capable of handling any armed Arab retaliation.

2. Israeli foreign minister blames US for Arab-Israeli tension:

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[redacted] The Israeli foreign minister told the US charge in Tel Aviv that "American appeasement of the Arabs" has been a factor in producing the current Arab-Israeli tension. Washington policy, according to the minister, "encourages Arab appetites and makes it doubly unnecessary for them to come to agreement with Israel."

Another Foreign Ministry spokesman declared that US policy has created in the Israeli population a "disastrous" feeling of isolation and lack of friendship.

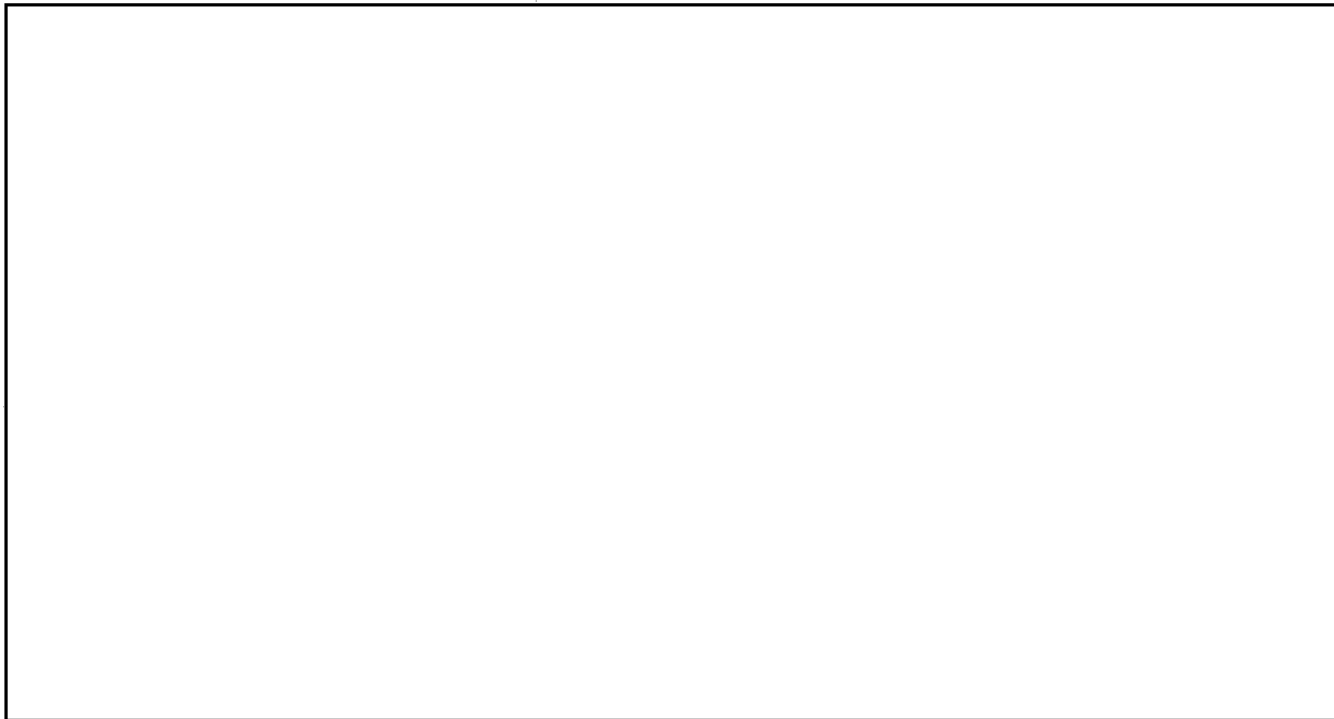
Comment: Despite such expressions of bitterness, Israel's dependence on Western economic aid prevents adoption of a neutralist or pro-Soviet policy.

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## WESTERN EUROPE

4. Italian chief of staff fears Yugoslav attack:

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The Italian armed forces chief of staff states that Yugoslavia's military build-up may lead to an attack on Italy at any moment. He told the American army attache in Rome that the Italian army

could not defend the frontier area at present.

The army attache comments that this is the first time in the present crisis that a responsible Italian military man has voiced fear of a Yugoslav attack.

5. Pressure increases within French cabinet for five-power talks on Indochina:

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The attitude of the special Vietnamese Congress toward the French Union has led the group within the French cabinet

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favoring negotiations for ending the Indochina war to clamor more insistently for five-power talks including Communist China.

The chief of Premier Laniel's staff, who conveyed this information, said that Laniel was nevertheless determined to continue his present policy.

Comment: The resolution of the Vietnamese Congress rejected membership in the French Union "in its present form."

Assembly opponents of Laniel's program have succeeded in scheduling a debate on Indochina for 23 October. The government will probably try to parry criticism by seeking support until the results of Navarre's campaign can be assessed, stressing that the Vietnamese Congress had weakened its original rejection of French Union status.

6. Bidault to force integration issue in French Assembly:

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French foreign minister Bidault told Secretary Dulles in London that he would resign unless the National Assembly takes a "positive stand"

on both the EDC and the proposed political community before the meeting of foreign ministers at The Hague now scheduled for late November. He expects the next six weeks to be difficult, but reiterated his determination to push ahead with the EDC and the Indochina war.

Comment: For internal political reasons the Laniel government has scheduled a general debate on foreign policy in November although planning to delay a vote on the EDC until early next year. This strategy fails to take advantage of the present momentum favorable to EDC.

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